



Chartered
Institute of
Editing and
Proofreading

Governance transformation: An update on progress

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Governance transformation: An update on progress

Written by Louise Harnby, chair, and Christine Yeates, CEO

Our CEO, Christine Yeates, has been in post for three months, and now is the perfect time to reflect on where we are in the governance transformation project, and what changes this is bringing to how the Institute is run.

What's required to run the CIEP?

There are two distinct aspects to the running of a chartered institute: governance and operations. Both are essential and work together to ensure that the organisation is sustainable and able to flourish.



What is governance?

Governance is about planning ahead, oversight and accountability. It's concerned with the CIEP's strategic direction of travel and overall performance within a framework of codes, policies, procedures and practices, including the Charter, Membership Codes, Bylaws and Regulations. It includes:

- strategic planning
- financial oversight
- risk management
- creation and review of best-practice policies and procedures to ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, as well as ethical and professional standards
- assessing the organisation's overall performance, impact and sustainability

- reviewing the performance of the CEO
- championing members' needs and interests, and the profession.

What is operations?

Operations is about action and implementation. It's concerned with the day-to-day practical activities and processes necessary to run the CIEP, and to achieve its goals and Charter Objects. It includes:

- financial management
- line management of staff and contractors
- management of processes and procedures to ensure that the Institute can operate efficiently, profitably and according to its Charter Objects and strategic plan
- membership administration and customer service
- commissioning, developing and managing products and services
- sales promotion and marketing
- dispute management and resolution
- member communications.

What is governance transformation and why is it necessary?

Governance transformation is the term the Council uses to describe the **shifting of responsibility for operational work to the office, thereby allowing the Council to perform its governance function effectively.**

Historically, being a Council member meant having responsibility for governance *and* operations. And as the organisation grew and changed, operational activities increased to such an extent that governance responsibilities took a back seat. There simply weren't enough hours in the day to do otherwise.

When a governing body doesn't have time to carry out its governance responsibilities, and volunteers are in charge of all operational responsibility, risks can emerge. For the CIEP, these included:

- **Strategic planning:** Council members spent so much time on day-to-day practical work that there was insufficient space to look at the bigger picture and make plans for longer-term growth that would allow the Institute and its members to flourish and its Charter Objects to be achieved.
- **Operational coherence:** With no direction of travel in place, operational decisions tended to be made on demand rather than within a considered framework of goals and priorities.

- **Editorial business impact:** Council members worked well beyond the required 12 voluntary hours a month – often as many as 40 ... even more on occasion. This has impacted on their personal lives and editorial businesses.
- **Cost control:** Council members are paid for work over and above (OAA) the agreed 12 hours. While the Council recognised the huge cost to the Institute of OAA work, there was no mechanism in place to reduce it as long as they continued to be responsible for the day-to-day operational work.
- **Project management:** Complex and large-scale projects, such as the new digital platform, stagnated because they were too big to be run by volunteers with additional CIEP and their own business responsibilities.
- **Systems:** The organisation's systems – for example the website, the blog, the database that manages member records and the platform that enables us to send out member communications – didn't speak to each other or were creaking at the seams, which meant huge frustrations for our staff and a reduction in productivity.
- **Premises:** The Institute's Devonshire Square premises, though a big improvement on Apsley House, were still extremely expensive and far too small to provide a healthy working environment, particularly in the event that we hired more staff.
- **Risk management:** There were no formal mechanisms or processes in place to identify and mitigate threats that might derail the Institute's ability to function effectively.
- **Skills:** Council members were tasked with managing operational work, such as dispute management, that proved challenging given their dual responsibilities (with their business/day job) and the fact that their practical skills are primarily editorial.
- **People management:** Staff were line managed on a part-time basis by a volunteer chair who had dual responsibilities (with their business/day job).

Things had to change, and the Council agreed to begin the process of governance transformation in March 2023.

Stage 1 of the transformation process

Key to this project was hiring a CEO – a person to whom the Council would delegate sufficient authority such that they could take responsibility for CIEP operations.

Paul Wilson joined us as interim CEO in 2023. Together, he and the Council embarked on the first stage of governance transformation – a four-pronged project that focused on putting the foundations in place:



Premises

- Relocate office to Milton Keynes



People

- Hire skilled staff, including a permanent CEO



Systems

- Deliver new integrated digital platform



Processes

- Create risk review, data control and governance calendar tools

The Council also published its strategic plan – a roadmap for the direction of travel over the next five years.

The CIEP strategic plan 2023–2028
From the Institute's Charter to its strategic goals

The CIEP's Charter Objects

- (i) To encourage and foster in the public interest high standards of editing, proofreading and other editorial work.
- (ii) To develop and uphold the editorial profession, particularly editing and proofreading, by promoting honourable professional practice.
- (iii) To exchange and disseminate information on editorial work and associated matters.
- (iv) To act as the authoritative body in matters of principles, practice, standards, education, training, qualifications, research and awards of the editorial profession.

The CIEP Council's strategic activities

- Analysis and discovery of mission, values, vision and strategic pillars
- Identification of strategic goals and objectives
- Annual strategic workshops
- Quarterly strategic reviews
- Improved internal and member communication

Member-focused objectives: Turning goals into action

Governance and organisation	Customer and community experience	Professional development	Professional standards	Financial stability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Membership Codes Launch new digital platform Recruit key office staff including permanent CEO Create workplace policies on wellbeing and menopause Benchmark and reduce environmental impact Encourage more members to stand for election to the Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop member benefits strategy Create discovery pathway for new joiners Create EDI standing committee Launch principles-based accessibility guidelines Create awards/funds working group Appoint adviser to explore individual chartership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey members to discover learning needs at all levels Improve access to curriculum aligned with upgrade process Explore mentoring programme Implement digital accreditation Investigate integrated training platform Provide strategic support to manager via Learning and Professional Development Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver and implement external relations strategy Develop tests in other Englishes, starting with US English Review 7-year-rule policy Create more efficient upgrade pathway Improve transparency regarding upgrade points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase course sales Increase net membership subscriptions Expand event-sponsorship opportunities Set sales and growth targets for staff Turn office premises into a CIEP asset

CIEP VALUES
ethical, inclusive, professional, supportive, trustworthy

Stage 2 of the transformation process

In March 2024, the Council, CEO and staff came together for a two-day workshop at which we identified our priorities for the next 12 months, particularly now that some of our original objectives have been achieved or are in sight (for example, staff recruitment, delivery of the Membership Codes and launch of the digital platform). We'll be sharing the revised strategic plan with you soon.

In the meantime, operational work continues to shift to the office. For example:

- The CEO (rather than the Council) is responsible for all operational work.
- Staff are line managed by the CEO (rather than the chair).
- The CEO (rather than the professional standards director) is the main point of contact for the Admissions Panel, forging an appropriate separation between members tasked with assessing upgrades and the Council.
- The CEO (rather than the chair) is the disciplinary officer, so that members involved in professional practice or general conduct disputes can be assured of greater impartiality.
- Marketing, including social media activity, is managed by Nicola Richardson, the membership and marketing manager (rather than the marketing director).
- The tutors are managed by Sarah Magee, the professional development manager (rather than the training director).
- Newsletters and other member communications are managed by Nicola, the membership and marketing manager (rather than information and communications directors).
- Professional development is managed by Sarah, the professional development manager (rather than information and training directors).
- Membership services and benefits are managed by Nicola, the membership and marketing manager (rather than the membership director).
- The new digital platform is managed by Cecilia Kupera, the digital services officer (rather than the digital services director).

We have also started to reduce the heavy reliance we had on other members supporting us with operational tasks. We would not have been able to function as an Institute without their contributions, and there will still be some activities where their involvement in CIEP business will be needed. However, by this time next year, the activity undertaken by the Council members working on digital services, training, community and conference operational work will have been transferred to the office.

The risks identified in 2023 have now been mitigated because we have the following:

- ✓ A strategic plan with a cohesive set of operational objectives.
- ✓ More reasonable working hours for Council members.
- ✓ A reduction in Council member costs.
- ✓ A new integrated digital platform that's nearly ready for launch.
- ✓ A healthy working environment that our staff are excited about working in.
- ✓ A twice-yearly risk-review process, logged in a governance calendar.
- ✓ Staff with the appropriate skills and training carrying out operational work.
- ✓ Professional full-time line management of staff.

What about the Council's oversight?

Does this mean the Council is no longer interested in the matters it used to have operational responsibility for? Far from it!

Every Council member is interested in professional standards. Every Council member is interested in professional development. Every Council member is interested in the membership experience. Furthermore, it is a collective responsibility, and not just the role of a single director.

Those things – and others – are enshrined in our **Charter Objects**:

(i) To encourage and foster in the public interest high standards of editing, proofreading and other editorial work.

(ii) To develop and uphold the editorial profession, particularly editing and proofreading, by promoting honourable professional practice.

(iii) To exchange and disseminate information on editorial work and associated matters.

(iv) To act as the authoritative body in matters of principles, practice, standards, education, training, qualifications, research and awards of the editorial profession.

and our **five strategic pillars and goals**:



We'll be publishing a new Council member role description in due course so that you can see what being on the Council involves. We hope it will encourage more of you to stand for election later in the year.

The Regulations allow for up to 12 Council members. The Nominations Committee reviews this on an annual basis and makes a recommendation to the serving Council based on the Institute's needs.

So who's in charge?

In this model of transformed governance, where operational work shifts to the office, some of you might be asking: Who's in charge – the Council or the CEO?

In reality, it's a balancing act. And to make sense of it, we need to consider **authority** and **responsibility**, because they're different.

- **Authority** is about who has the power to make decisions and define the outcomes.
- **Responsibility** is about who's tasked with executing those decisions and delivering those outcomes.

The Council, elected by and accountable to the members, has the ultimate authority, and it is responsible for carrying out all governance activities, including determining the direction of travel in accordance with the Charter Objects. This direction of travel takes the form of the strategic plan.

However, the Regulations allow the Council to delegate some of its authority to a CEO. That's what we've done with Christine, and it enables her to run operations. It means that she's responsible for all activities required to turn the strategy from a written plan into a real-life set of outcomes that members benefit from, as well as ensuring that the CIEP is run effectively.

Christine and the Council consult with each other on a regular basis. This checking-in process ensures that everyone is accountable and informed, and that governance and operations are working in harmony with each other.

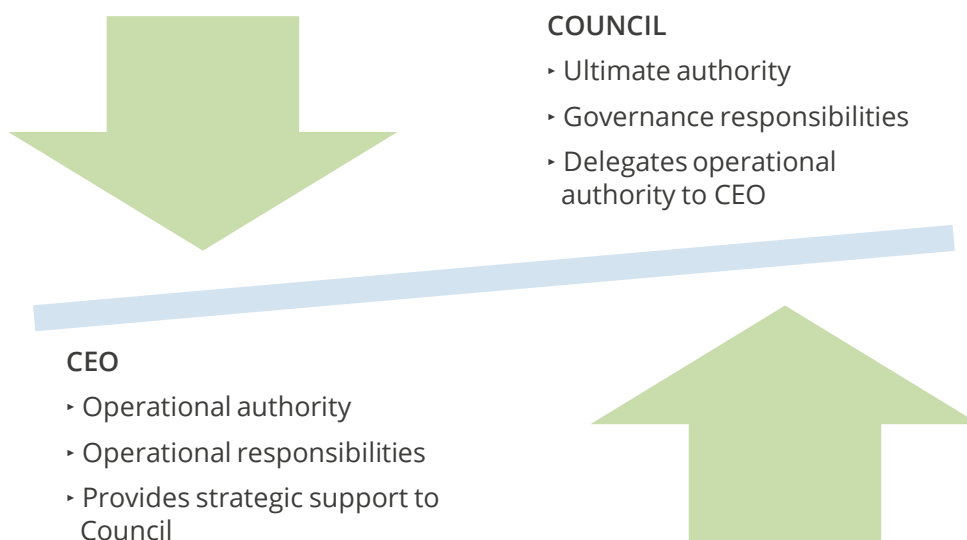
Why did the Council delegate operational authority?

To explain why the Council agreed to delegate operational authority, the doctor-patient relationship is a useful analogy.

If you were a poorly editor, you could either retrain as a medic and treat yourself, or you could visit a doctor and give them the authority to treat you in the way that will serve you best, based on their knowledge, skills, training and experience.

It's still your body, and you have the ultimate authority when it comes to approving treatment, but most of the time you'd elect to trust your doctor and follow their recommendations on which pills to take, at what time of day and in which order. After all, they've got the medical experience and training that you don't. It's their job to make you better. And trusting them with that means you'll get results faster than if you'd ditched your editing job and signed up for medical school.

It's not so different for the CIEP. Christine is an experienced senior executive with years of experience in the membership sector. She knows how to run an organisation, manage staff and work with a governing body. She and her team are full-time employees who have skills and experience that the volunteer Council members don't. Handing over operational authority to her so she can advise us on the best way to turn strategy into outcomes – including which steps to take, when and in which order – will mean members get results faster.



And the Council, now freed of its operational work, can focus on its governance responsibilities, always holding the Charter Objects in mind.

Does the office team have the appropriate knowledge?

The office is staffed by non-editors who have the required knowledge and skills to run the CIEP. Where it's necessary to supplement that knowledge with guidance on editorial practice, the editorial market and what it's like to be a CIEP member, or it's useful for the team to be able to access institutional memory, the Council and committees/panels are ready and waiting to help. These include the Admissions Panel, the Learning and Professional Development Committee and any subcommittees of Council, such as the Remuneration Committee, some of which benefit from the presence of non-Council CIEP members.

Who should members talk to if they need support?

You might also be wondering how this affects who you get in touch with.

The CIEP has many members, all with different needs, preferences and interests. We want to make things easier for you so that you get support from the Council and office team in the most efficient way possible.





We also need to recognise that, with the Council's role changing, how we communicate with each other needs to change too.

As part of our strategic planning, the Council worked with the CEO on how to improve the way things currently work, and in a manner that respects:

- members' right to have a direct line to the people they've elected
- the expansion of our staff team
- the shift of operational responsibilities and activities to the office
- Council members' businesses and personal commitments
- the necessity of reducing OAA costs.

We have already started to streamline the number of email addresses that members, and others, use to contact the CIEP. The office team is now geared up to take emails about any subject matter. They can usually answer the query straight away. Sometimes, they will seek the advice of Council if an issue is more complex or nuanced.

Once the digital platform is live, you'll be able to get support in other ways too. Here's how you will be able to get in touch. If you're ever unsure which option to use, just ask the office and they'll advise you.

			
Suggestion box	Live clinics	Ask the Council	Ask the office
<p>PURPOSE</p> <p>Members can share their feedback or suggest ideas in writing.</p>	<p>PURPOSE</p> <p>Members invited to attend open Q&As with the Council and topic-specific webinars with staff.</p>	<p>PURPOSE</p> <p>Members can contact the Council directly about governance matters (including strategy) in writing.</p>	<p>PURPOSE</p> <p>Members can get advice and help on practical issues and concerns via email or telephone.</p>
<p>FORMAT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form on website that's submitted to the office. • CEO logs information and discusses with Council. 	<p>FORMAT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoom meeting. • Schedule and registration links on website. 	<p>FORMAT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form on website that's submitted to the chair. • Chair shares with Council and CEO, and responds within 30 days by email. • Longer responses of value to the whole membership published on website as Q&As. 	<p>FORMAT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email link on website. • Telephone number on website. • Office manager or administrator forwards queries to relevant member of staff or chair.

What about the forums?

Forums are a great place for members to discuss governance, operational and editorial matters between themselves, but they don't work so well for having two-way dialogue with the Council or the office team on a day-to-day basis.

We want to hear from you and encourage you to share your ideas, thoughts and concerns, but in a way that gives us the necessary time and space to consider your views and suggestions carefully and properly. And for the simple questions, they'll usually get addressed much more quickly with an email to the office, who are able to check messages throughout the day, leading to a speedier response.

For that reason, if action by the Council or office is requested in a forum thread, a Council member will post there, advising members which channel to use to get the most appropriate support.

Summing up

We hope this paper offers you clarity about the changes over the past year or so, and why they're necessary.

On a day-to-day basis, most of you likely won't notice any difference to how member services are delivered because most operational work takes place behind the scenes.

What you will notice is improvements to your member experience as we launch the new digital platform and begin work on the priorities identified at this year's annual strategy workshop. As we've mentioned in *The Editoralist*, some of those big projects will require your participation, and we hope some of you will feel motivated to get involved.

If you have any questions about this paper, please email the chair on chair@ciep.uk. Louise will discuss with the Council and CEO, and respond to you in due course.